

VZCZCXYZ0033

OO RUEHWEB

DE RUEHC #8748 3502241

ZNR UUUUU ZZH

O 162240Z DEC 09

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO USMISSION USOSCE IMMEDIATE 6528

UNCLAS STATE 128748

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PHUM](#) [PREL](#) [KDEM](#) [OSCE](#) [BO](#)

SUBJECT: OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL: RESPONSE TO BELARUSIAN
FOREIGN MINISTER MARTYNOV

11. (U) Post is authorized to present the following statement at the December 17 Permanent Council meeting in Vienna, should Belarusian Foreign Minister Martynov address the Council.

BEGIN TEXT:

Thank you, Madam Chair.

The United States welcomes Foreign Minister Martynov to the Permanent Council. We listened with interest to his presentation.

We strongly support the extension of the mandate of the OSCE Office in Minsk and believe it can continue to do valuable work across all three dimensions of security. We believe that the flexibility and dynamic action of OSCE field missions is one of the organization's greatest strengths, and are firmly convinced that field missions should be free to develop and undertake programs within their mandates, without having individual projects micro-managed.

In August, Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Affairs Philip H. Gordon traveled to Minsk, where he engaged the Belarusian government about prospects for working together to improve bilateral relations between our two countries. We have made it clear that such improvements can come only through actions by the government of Belarus to improve respect for the basic human rights and democratic aspirations of the Belarusian people. Unfortunately, Belarusian authorities' continued pressure against civil society, including arbitrary harassment of independent activists, denials of registration of NGOs, and recent violent dispersals of peaceful public gatherings demonstrate that lack of progress.

We thank you, Mr. Minister, for your presence here today, and hope that you view our comments in the spirit of cooperation in which they were intended.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

END TEXT.

CLINTON